

JOHN KEATS



ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT

FIRST SIX STANZAS OF

"POT OF BASIL" (ISABELLA)

44
Autograph poem by Keats - given to me by
his friend - my friend, G. Brown Esq. - G. W.

Fair Isabella, poor simple Isabel:
Lorenzo a young Palmer ^{his} & ^{eye} ~~Lore's~~ ~~dear~~,
They could not in the self same mansion dwell
Without some stir of Heart, some Malady -
They could ^{not} eat at meals but feel how well
It soothed each to be each other by
They could ^{not} ~~not~~ ^{only} ^{eye} sleep beneath the same roof sleep
But to each other dream and nightly weep

With ^{every} ^{night} ~~with~~ ~~night~~ their love grew ten deeper
With the every night deeper and tenderer still:
~~They~~ ^{The} might not in House, field or Garden stir
But her full shape would all his seeing fill
And his continual voice was felt as water
To her than noise of trees or hidden rill
Her lute string gave an echo of his Name
~~The~~ ~~was~~ ~~a~~ ~~line~~ ~~half~~ ~~done~~ ~~broody~~ ~~with~~ ~~his~~
The ~~was~~ ^{short} ~~was~~ ~~short~~ her half done broody with the ^{same}

3
~~The~~ ~~Princ~~ ~~He~~ ~~Princ~~ whose gentle hand was on the lock
Before the door had given her to his eye,
And from his Chamber window he would ^{catch}
Her Beauty farer than the Falcon's spire
As constant as her Vesper would he watch
Because her face was kind to the same spheres
As ^{eyes} ^{with} ^{sigh} ^{longing} ^{at} ^{the} ^{right} ^{entire} ^{eye}
~~So~~ ~~near~~ ~~her~~ ~~morning~~ ~~with~~ ~~when~~ ~~the~~ ~~stars~~

KEATS - Lot 407 - Sale AUGUST 12/13TH, 1941.

This must be the Manuscript Keats left in his Shakespeare and wrote for to George Keats from Teignmouth. He mentioned it in two letters to Reynolds:-

1. 27 April, 1818. 'I have written for my folio Shakespeare in which there is the first few stanzas of my "Pot of Basil". I have the rest here finished.'
2. 3 May, 1818. 'I have written to George for the first stanzas of my Isabel - I shall have them soon and will copy the whole out for you.'

STANZA II

1. 2. ~~will~~ ~~And~~ every night deeper and tenderer still Mss.
~~will~~ ~~And~~ every eve deeper and tenderer still First edition

STANZA III

1. 3. And from his chamber-window he would catch Mss
And from her chamber-window he would catch First edition
1. 4. Her beauty farer than the Faulcon spies Mss
Her beauty farther than the falcon spies First edition

STANZA IV

1. 2. Made their lips paler by the break of June Mss.
Made their cheeks paler by the break of June First edition
1. 6. Lorenzo, if thy tongue play not love's tune Mss
Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's tune First edition

STANZA VI

1. 4. For power to speak but no the ruddy tide Mss
For power to speak but still the ruddy tide First edition

STANZA V

1. 1. And at the most twill startle off her cares Mss
And at the least twill startle off her cares First edition

JOHN KEATS, MS stanzas 1-6 of "Isabella."

[reproduced on plates 3-5]

AMS, 3 pages. Double sheet, 20.4 x 12.6 cm.

Laid paper. Watermark obscured owing to sheet's being glued to brown paper backing.

Provenance: [at top of backing paper:] Autograph poem by Keats—given to me by | *his* friend—*my* friend, C Brown Esq.^r.—G.W. In a red buckram folding case, with brown leather rectangle on cover, gold lettered JOHN KEATS | [ornament] | ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT | FIRST SIX STANZAS OF | "POT OF BASIL" (ISABELLA). Typed sale slip reads KEATS—Lot 407—Sale AUGUST 12/13TH, 1941.

Notes: 1. Page [3], 2 inches below last line, in the hand of George Keats: Thursday— | —A letter by to-morrow's post will find John | at Teignmouth — G.K.

2. On 27 April 1818 the poet wrote John Reynolds from Teignmouth that he was sending for his folio Shakespeare, in which were "the first few stanzas of my 'Pot of Basil,'" the rest being "here finished."

3. The substantive variations of printed texts from this MS are considerable.

Excerpt from:

Kendall, Lyle H., Jr. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the W.L. Lewis Collection--Part One.*

Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1970.